

Teacher Incentive Pay

HB 3, the new school finance bill, establishes an optional Local Teacher Designation System and Teacher Incentive Allotment, which authorizes school districts to create their own local teacher designation systems and use these designations to leverage additional funding under the Teacher Incentive Allotment. The new law provides incentives for districts to prioritize placing teachers in high needs areas and rural district campuses, without an absolute guarantee that these teachers will see substantial rewards.

Although the Texas Education Agency has not released details on how the allotment will work, this is what TSTA knows so far:

Locally Optional Teacher Designation Systems: As part of the new allotment, districts have the option of creating a locally developed system to designate teachers, which would designate certified classroom teachers as either master, exemplary, or recognized teachers for a five-year period based on an appraisal system.

TEA has indicated that it will release more on teacher designation systems next month, but this is what TSTA knows so far:

- Teacher Designation Systems will be developed locally and approved by the commissioner
- The commissioner is required to develop standards and work with Texas Tech University to monitor the quality and fairness of local optional teacher designation systems.
- The commissioner cannot require a district to use STAAR to measure the teachers, but a local school board may vote to include this in its local system.
- Provides that all NBCT are automatically designated as recognized
- Requires TEA to study and “collect information necessary to implement”
- Establishes that the teacher has no vested property right to a designation
- Requires the mathematical possibility that all teachers can receive a designation

It is unclear to what extent teacher appraisals will be required for the study, but TSTA will fight to maintain all confidentiality in those evaluations.

Teacher Incentive Allotment: HB 3 creates a Teacher Incentive Allotment for high-needs or rural campuses using the teacher designation system.

Here is what we know:

- Funding will range from \$3,000 to \$32,000 per teacher per year: Participating districts will receive a base amount of \$12,000 for master teachers, \$6,000 for exemplary teachers, and \$3,000 for recognized teachers, but those amounts are then increased by factors in certain

areas, such as the level of economic disadvantage of the campus at which the teacher is placed and whether the campus is designated as rural or non-rural.

- Teachers generating the funds will not necessarily receive a raise: At least 90% of the funds generated must be spent on compensation of teachers at these campuses, *but there does not appear to be a guarantee that it will directly increase the salary of the specific teacher generating the funding.*

TSTA will be monitoring updates from TEA about the Teacher Incentive Allotment. It is likely that only districts that already had a similar incentives-based pay system in place before House Bill 3 was enacted will receive funding for the 2019-2020 school year; however, school boards are likely to begin developing local models for the 2020-2021 year.